9733
88

THE

Louſe-Trap:

A

POEM.

In IMITATION of the

MOUSE-TRAP.

Sequiturque Patrem non poſſibus æquis. recte VIRG.

LONDON:

Printed for T. WARNER, at the *Black-boy* in *Pater-noſter-Row.*
1723. (Price Four-Pence)

Harvard College Library
Shapleigh Fund
June 14 1929

LOUISIAD:

A

POEM.

In IMITATION of the

MOUSE-TRAP.

Printed for T. WARNER, at the Black-Boy in Paternoster-Row.
1729.
(Price Four-Pence.)

THE LOUSE-TRAP: A POEM.

LONG have I wish'd renowned Heroe's Praise
To sing, and thence immortal Glory raise;
Such as to them is due who celebrate,
In lofty Numbers, Actions truly great;

Whose

Whoſe grateful Lines let future Ages ſee
The Worth of thoſe, who did from Monſters free
The harras'd World, and gave it Liberty.

NOW is the time! ye Muſes all deſcend,
And to an *Iriſh* Bard your aid extend;
The Subject of his Verſe, not leſs than that,
Which heretofore, ye grac'd in *Virgil*'s Gnat;
Such as has *Oldſworth*'s Name (to *Cambria* dear)
Made famous, for her beſt beloved Cheer:
Cheeſe, reſcued from the Jaws of hungry Mice,
And *Taffy*'s Glory taking thence it's riſe.

THERE is an Animal, I need not name,
Well known it is to all, in all the ſame;
Juſt in the Crown it has it's lofty Seat,
And there at once finds Food and a Retreat.
To other Parts it ſometimes takes it's Way,
And o'er the Back, and Shoulders broad does ſtray;
But for the moſt Part loves to dwell among,
Diſhevel'd Hair, and matted Treſſes long:
A ſpear-like Trunk it's furious Front does arm,
And Briſtles ſtiff ſecure, from outward harm
It's limpid Body, from the which there fall
Twice three well joynted Legs, right ſtrong, tho' ſmall.
Enrag'd with hunger, or it bites the Skin,
And from the Wound the purple Blood ſucks in;

Or

Or pulls a ſlender Hair, by force, thereout,
And in it's Place, does with it's pointed Snout,
Dig an Entrenchment where ſecure to hide in,
In times of perſecution to reſide in.

THIS Monſter long to all a Foe had been,
But 'gainſt the *Taylor* moſtly ſhew'd his Spleen;
Becauſe of fetid moiſter ſtill abounding,
And ſtinking Scurf his Body all ſurrounding.
Now at his Ear it ſits, now on his Pole,
Or in his Collar fix'd, it makes it's Hole.

THE *Taylor* can no longer bear the Smart,
The Foe to diſpoſſeſs, with niceſt Art;
He ſtrives, and gently does his Shirt unbutton,
And clumſy Fingers thinks, poor Louſe to put on:
But now thro' other well known Paths it hies,
And in his buſhy Locks ſecurely lies;
Nor will be driven thence, for well it knows
To twine it's Legs among the dangling Boughs;
There biting faſt, with Claws infix'd it kept
It's hold, the *Taylor* ſcratch'd, and almoſt wept.
For by ſuch wiles as theſe he oft had been
Trick'd by the wary Louſe, with hunger keen.

WHERE it had learn'd theſe Shifts, we might admire,
Had we not ſeen the *Sticher*'s ſelf retire,

Into ſuch lurking Holes, wherein to ſhun
The magick Blow of *Catch-pole*, or a *Dun*.

THIS many footed Monſter now to quell,
Th' aſſembl'd *Taylors* met, their Seat is *Hell*;
A Place ſo term'd by Wags, becauſe the Store
Therein conceal'd muſt come to light no more.
There ragged Cloaks, and Breeches thread-bare worn,
Waſtcoats, and Doublets, all to tatters torn;
Into the ſtolen Heap are tumbled by,
And Scraps of various Cloath in ſtrange Diſorder lye.

WHERE as they croſs-leg'd ſat, each ſcratch'd his Head,
With looks expreſſive of his Smart and Dread.
At length aroſe a Man of ſhrew'd Device,
Filch-Cloth by name, *Filch-Cloth* who in a trice
Could ſteal a Snip; none better skill'd than he
To ſave a Remnant; none ſo dextrouſly
Could pilfer, for as common Fame does tell,
Where others ſtole an *Inch*, he ſtole an *Ell*.

THIS crafty Wight (who ne'er was known to fail,
T' extirpate Vermin both with Tooth and Nail)
Some into ſcorching Flames had caſt, but more
Had with his Needle ſtab'd, or dy'd his Thumb in Gore. Thrice

Thrice ſhrugging 's Shoulders grinn'd around the Board,
And then deſir'd he might be heard a Word.

'You can't, my Bretheren, ſaid he, but know
'What we endure from this blood-thirſty Foe,
'(Oh wou'd ye knew it not!) but too too plain
'Th' envenom'd Spots, which do our Bodies ſtain,
'Do prove our Sufferings. Which of us can ſay
'He ſleeps a Nights, or works in peace by Day?
'No ſooner does ſweet Sleep our Eye-lids cloſe,
'But we 're attack'd by Swarms of reſtleſs Foes;
'Who o'er our Backs in triumph ride, and vex us,
'And bite, and gall, and ſorely do perplex us.

'Ev'n I (my Face all pale, no ſign of native red,
'Shews how from ev'ry Vein my Blood is ſhed)
'What woes have I not felt? He op'd his Veſt,
'And ſhew'd the Marks imprinted on his Breaſt.'

Not *Telamonian Ajax*'s ſelf could boaſt
More Wounds, when from amidſt the *Trojan* Hoſt,
He ſtrove to bear *Patroclus*'s Corps away,
When on his ſingle Arm, hung the then doubtful Day.

'Now are we met, theſe Monſters to remove,
'(Ye Gods look down with favour from above,

'On

'On the Attempt) and ye, O *Sages* wiſe!
'Exert your utmoſt Skill in th' Enterprize;
'Shew how by Force, or Stratagem, to kill
'This biting Brood, who ſo much Blood do ſpill.
'So ſhall your Names, to late Poſterity,
'Be fam'd above St *Patrick*'s, for that he,
'From Vipers, Toads, and Snakes, who freed the Land,
'Yet left theſe Lice for your more pow'rful Hand,
'So ſhall your Praiſe be more deſerv'dly great,
'He but began the Work, which you at length com-
'pleat.

THUS when he, like an Orator, had ſaid,
A Louſe abruptly came and nip'd the Thread
Of his Diſcourſe; his Fingers, quick as Thought,
Forth from his Neck, the hideous Monſter brought,
Which now extended, on his Palm, he laid,
That all might ſee how wonderouſly 'twas made,
How large it's Limbs, how wide it's Mouth, how red,
How full of Blood it's Paunch, and how well arm'd his Head.

WHEN all had view'd, 'twixt Thumb and Fingers faſt
He took it up, and ſaid, *Thou'ſt bit thy laſt*,

Then

Then with his Yard he gave it such a thwack,
As made it's Skin testaceous, to crack.
The Walls were ting'd with Blood, the Louse ex-
expir'd,
And *Filch-Cloath* thus went on, by all desir'd.

'I THOUGHT, my Friends, your Sentiments to
know,
'How to avoid those Ills we undergoe;
'But since I see you all in silence sit,
'I'll tell you what I've thought, perhaps, 't may
'hit.

'ONE Night I came home drunk, as oft I do,
'My Wife (O sad! my Wife) in fury flew,
'To pull me by the Hair; but as she try'd,
'The slender Hairs did thro' her Fingers glide ----
'Not so the Lice; of them there crawl'd a Swarm,
'By their own Bulk obstructed, in her Palm.

'WHAT if we should pursue this Hint, and make
'some kind of Trap, wherein the Foe to take?
'For my own Part, at least, resolv'd am I,
'What think you, SIRS? It is no harm to try.

He said: And then the Shop-board look'd a-
round.
The spacious Board does with his Praise resound.

In Raptures each enlarg'd upon the Scheme,
And paid his grateful Thanks to *Filch-Cloath*'s Name.

THEN roſe another Sage, 'I well aprove,
'Said he, the means, theſe Monſters to remove,
'Which now you take, ſince force does ever fail,
'*Filch-Cloath*'s Stratagem, it muſt prevail
'Or nothing can. And you, O Brother dear!
'Who firſt our drooping Heads and Hearts did'ſt
'chear.
'Goe on and proſper. To your friendly Care
'We truſt the Management of this Affair;
'Greatly perform what wiſely you 've begun,
'So ſhall the mighty Work at laſt be done.
'So, may you vie with *Hercules* in fame,
'With many Wounds the *Hydra* he o'ercame,
'But you, without one Wound, ſhall many Monſters
'tame.

WITH chearful Looks they riſe, and all repair
Each to his ſev'ral Garret vile, and there
To Wives and Children tell, what now they hop'd
From *Filch-Cloath*'s ſtrange Machine; then joyntly op'd
Their Mouths, and with one Voice, the Gods beſought
The Thing might be to wiſh'd Perfection brought.

Now *Filch-Cloath*, mindful of his great Intent,
Sat down to make the promis'd Inſtrument.

(He

(He could not well forget, for at his Ear
There ſat, and prick'd him on to perſevere,
A faithful Monitor) with anxious Care
And ſtudious Pains he brought at laſt to bear,
His well weigh'd Project, finiſhing what ſome
In ſcorn a *Louſe-Trap* call, but more a *Comb*.

No Age has yet produc'd a Thing more rare;
The Gods themſelves are ſaid to 've had a Share
In the Performance: *Merc'ry*, who preſides
Over the thieving Art, help'd much, beſides
Vulcan (as Poets ſay) the cuckol'd God,
To th' *Taylors* Company his Horn beſtow'd.

At length, th' egregious Work compleatly done,
The *Taylors*, ſummon'd in vaſt Numbers come:
Filch-Cloath to them ſteps forth, and in his Hand
The wondrous Inſtrument, amaz'd they ſtand
Itching to know it's Uſe: One half h' applyed,
(Like two edg'd Sword it ſlew on either Side)
Cloſe to his Scull, when, lo, there fell an Heap
Of Lice! above the Size of plumpeſt Grains of Wheat.

With joyful Looks, they ſee, and grateful Hearts,
When, from the Crow'd, an Orator there ſtarts,
Who in th' Aſſembly's Name their Thanks expreſs'd;
Thrice cry'd *Ehem*, and *Filch-Cloath* thus addreſs'd.

'Thou

‘ THOU Glory of *Hibernia*'s happy Iſle,
‘ Whom *Taylors*, yet unborn, ſhall gladly ſtile,
‘ Their Father, their Preſerver. We decree
‘ (That this Invention may for ever be,
‘ With due Regard, recorded) you to bear
‘ A Name henceforth, which may your worth declare,
‘ And our Reſpect; that future times may know,
‘ Who *Filch-Cloath* was, but glorious *Prick-louſe* now;
‘ In ſweaty Pates, whilſt Lice do Nits engender,
‘ So long ſhall *Taylors* all *Prick-louſe*'s Name remember.

F I N I S.